

QUALIFICATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING POSITIONS*

IT IS GENERALLY known that hospital training is not sufficient training for nurses in the public health field.

The committee instituted by the N.O.P.H.N. to study visiting nursing found during its study that the requirements for the educational background for nurses are very flexible.

With the rapid development of public health nursing, the demand for nurses has exceeded the supply of qualified workers and we must therefore adopt desirable standards for the nurses in the public health field.

In a rapidly growing and expanding profession such as public health nursing we are faced at the very outset with the need of standards. Workers in the field have, through using their common sense and meeting the emergency as it has arisen, acquired field technique. Wishing to utilize this experience, we have endeavored to find out exactly what qualifications have enabled them to cope best with their problems.

It was the need of standards which caused the three national organizations, namely, the American Public Health Association, the State and Provincial Health Authorities of North America, and the National Organization for Public Health Nursing, to appoint a joint committee to consider the minimum qualifications for positions of directors and supervisors of public health and in addition to consider the higher standards which we hope to attain in 1930.

* Report of the Committee on Qualifications for Public Health Nursing Positions, representing the American Public Health Association, the State and Provincial Health Authorities of North America, and the National Organization for Public Health Nursing, presented to the Public Health Nursing Section of the A.P.H.A. at the Fifty-fourth Annual Meeting at St. Louis, Mo., October 21, 1925.

More and more nurses are being used for specialized fields such as communicable diseases, tuberculosis, school nursing, etc. There will be a still greater demand for trained workers in the future. Therefore, it is our problem to develop standards, to work toward properly trained workers, and to be prepared to supply those who are qualified.

By having properly qualified directors and supervisors the results of our work will be greater, more effectively done and more intelligently supervised. In this way they will be able to get the best results out of their subordinates and thereby meet the needs of the individual community.

STATISTICS

1. Schools of nursing, 1,744
2. Students registered, 50,897
3. Registration requirements of states:
 - 22 require 1 year high school
 - 10 require 2 years high school
 - 2 require 4 years high school (Ohio and Georgia)
 - New Hampshire prefers 4 years but requires 1 year
 - 4 require "admission to high school"
4. The following make no requirements regarding preliminary education:
 - Washington, Tennessee, New Mexico, Nevada and Connecticut
5. The following require grammar school:
 - Alabama, Mississippi, North Dakota and South Carolina
6. Rhode Island "as required by the board"
7. States requiring training schools to give "proof of preliminary education required or examination":
 - 5 states do not require
 - 23 do require
 - 14 question left blank
 - Wisconsin requires 4 years high school if under 18 years

Iowa schools make own entrance requirements

8. The percentage of nurses who received an introduction to the public health field while in training is very small. (This information has not been tabulated.)

NOTE.—Number of students in training now who are high school graduates can be obtained only through separate nurse examining boards.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THOSE APPOINTED TO POSITION OF SUPERVISING NURSE IN A PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICE

1. *Preliminary Education*

The minimum academic background should be two years of high school.

2. *Fundamental Nursing Education*

(1) Graduation from a school for nurses connected with a general hospital having a daily average of 30 patients or more and a continuous training in the hospital of not less than two years. Training shall include practical experience in caring for men, women and children, together with the theoretical and practical instruction in medical, surgical, obstetrical and pediatric nursing. Training may be secured in one or more hospitals.

(2) In addition to the services required in the fundamental technical education (obstetrics, pediatric, medical and surgical nursing), theoretical instruction and practical experience in one or more of the following services:

Public Health Nursing
Communicable Disease Nursing
Tuberculosis Nursing
Hospital Social Service
Mental Hygiene

(These services may be given in the school or taken as post-graduate work.)

(3) State registration in the state in which the nurse is to be employed.

3. *Qualifications*

In general a nurse supervisor should have the minimum qualifications outlined for the staff worker for 1930 and in addition she should have:

(1) Technical skill in the special field of public health nursing she is supervising.

(2) Ability to impart information in a constructive and sympathetic manner.

(3) Ability to delegate work and keep a satisfactory balance in the division of responsibilities.

(4) Ability to correlate the work of her

organization with that of other social and health agencies in the community.

(5) Ability to stimulate initiative and progress of staff nurses.

(6) Loyalty.

(7) Understanding of personalities and ability to deal with them.

(8) A personality that inspires confidence.

(9) Interest demonstrated by activity in:

(a) Profession

(b) Community

(10) Good health.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THOSE APPOINTED TO POSITION OF DIRECTOR OF A PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICE

1. *Minimum Qualifications for 1925*—These are in accordance with the qualifications for those appointed to positions in public health nursing as presented by the Committee to Formulate Standards for Positions in Public Health Nursing of the American Public Health Association presented at the Fifty-third Annual Meeting in Detroit, October 20, 1924, entitled "Desirable Qualifications for 1925" to become the Minimum Qualifications for 1930 or 1927, if possible.*

a. For nurses graduating from schools of nursing since 1920.

(1) At least four years of high school education or its equivalent.

(2) Fundamental nursing education—namely: Graduation from a school for nurses connected with a general hospital having a daily average of 30 patients or more and a continuous training in the hospital of not less than two years. Training shall include practical experience in caring for men, women and children, together with the theoretical, obstetrical and pediatric nursing. Training may be secured in one or more hospitals.

(3) In addition to the services required in the fundamental technical education (obstetrics, pediatric, medical and surgical nursing), theoretical instruction and practical experience in one or more of the following services:

Public Health Nursing
Communicable Disease Nursing
Tuberculosis Nursing
Hospital Social Service
Mental Hygiene

* A. J. P. H., June, 1925, p. 514.

(These services may be given in the school or taken as post-graduate work.)

(4) State registration in the state in which the nurse is to be employed.

b. For nurses graduating from schools of nursing before 1920.

(1) No academic qualifications stated.

(2) Professional training or experience which has developed a wisdom and judgment which is valuable in the public health nursing field in spite of the lack of formal academic education.

(3) Fundamental nursing education—namely: Graduation from a school for nurses connected with a general hospital having a daily average of 30 patients or more and a continuous training in the hospital of not less than two years. Training shall include practical experience in caring for men, women and children, together with the theoretical and practical instruction in medical, surgical, obstetrical and pediatric nursing. Training may be secured in one or more hospitals.

(4) In addition to the services required in the fundamental technical education (obstetric, pediatric, medical and surgical nursing), theoretical instruction and practical experience in one or more of the following services:

Public Health Nursing
Communicable Disease Nursing
Tuberculosis Nursing
Hospital Social Service
Mental Hygiene

(5) State registration in the state in which the nurse is to be employed.

2. Minimum Qualifications for 1930.

a. Preliminary Education

The minimum academic background should be a high school education or its equivalent.

A college education should be recognized as a very material additional asset. Since this position presupposes a breadth of vision and the ability to deal with people, it is to be hoped that no organization will consider the appointment of a director who has not acquired two years of education beyond the minimum requirement of education for her staff.

b. Fundamental Nursing Education

Graduation from a school of nursing accredited in the state in which it is located and connected with a general hospital having a daily average of 30 patients or more

and giving a continuous course in a school of nursing of not less than two years.

This nursing course shall include practical experience in the care of men, women and children together with theoretical and practical instruction in medical, surgical, obstetrical, pediatric and communicable disease nursing.

c. Public Health Preparation and Experience

(1) A nurse should have had at least two years of practical public health nursing field experience with a well organized association in part at least in some administrative capacity and she should have successfully demonstrated administrative ability and the power to interpret the health needs of the community.

(2) She should also have had a recognized public health nursing course in an educational institution presenting both theoretical and practical instruction including adequately supervised experience.

(3) An extensive and varied field experience may be considered to stand in part as an equivalent for such a public health nursing course.

(4) In addition to the services required in the fundamental nursing education, a candidate may have had practical experience in the following services:

Maternal Welfare
Infant Welfare
Communicable Disease Nursing, including Tuberculosis.

Experience in School Nursing may be considered an additional asset and quite essential for some positions.

(5) Registration under some state nurse practice law.

(6) She should of course have manifested wisdom, imagination, vision, judgment, loyalty and other traits of personality which constitute genuine leadership and executive ability which will enable her to inculcate in the minds of the members of the staff a desire to keep abreast of all the latest developments which affect the work in which they are engaged.

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